

imprints

The Newsletter of Literacy BC

New Board for Literacy BC

Literacy BC held its annual general meeting Friday October 1 in Vancouver. Guests included past and present members, practitioners, donors and contributors, and other friends. Our special guest speaker was Dr. Kathryn Barker, President of FuturEd. (see story on page two). After the meeting, guests mingled at a reception and looked over a display of new resources.

The Literacy BC Board for 1999-2000

Officers

President - **Paul Gallagher** (Capilano)
Vice-President - **Vicki Austad** (Lower Mainland)
Secretary - **Vicki Grieve** (Fraser Valley)
Treasurer - **Gloria Olafson** (New Caledonia)
Learner Representative - **Ellen Szita** (Camosun)

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Jennifer Cliff-Marks (Selkirk)
Wayne Cunningham (Cariboo)
Betty Knight (East Kootenay)
David Moddle (Malaspina)

Kate Nesbitt (Northwest)
Catherine Reynolds (North Island)
Bonnie Sloat (Member-at-large)
Donna Stewart (Okanagan)
Alan Tremayne (Northern Lights)

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The new board of Literacy BC.

Highlights — Keynote Speech at the AGM

"Lessons Learned" in Adult Literacy

Kathryn Barker, President of FuturEd, provided the keynote speech at Literacy BC's annual general meeting.

"Lessons Learned in Adult Literacy" is the result of a 10 year study based on the evaluation of policies, programs and practices in Canada and other industrialized countries. The study aimed to find out what worked well — and what did not — in the promotion of literacy. FuturEd gathered and analyzed studies produced from 1988 to 1998 in countries similar to Canada in terms of literacy needs and approaches — such as Australia, the U.S. and the UK. The study was commissioned by Human Resources Development Canada.

In her presentation, Kathryn outlined the importance of adult literacy in terms of three public policy issues:

- Economic activity / employment — literacy is an essential skill for work and participation in the economy
- Citizenship — to participate in democracy. "We can't make important decisions without it."

- Lifelong learning — "Literacy is a foundation for basic education and lifelong learning."

The "Lessons Learned" report draws seven conclusions or lessons:

- While adult literacy programs benefit both individuals and society, these benefits have not been fully realized due to low levels of public interest and political support. "The public sees literacy as a charitable issue, not an education issue."
- We know how to design and deliver good adult literacy programs, but conditions don't always exist to allow that to happen.
- Learning technologies can benefit adult literacy programs, but there is room for improvement. "Learning technologies are 'hot buttons' now because they're exciting and new. They are useful for attracting students, but there is no evidence they help students learn better."
- Adult literacy programs aimed at specific target groups appear to have better results, but there is a lack of effective, efficient and equitable delivery.

- Adults in need of upgrading face barriers that make it difficult to enter or remain in literacy programs.
- It is important that adult literacy learners have a say in policies and programs addressing their needs.
- More systematic evaluation of adult literacy policies, programs and practices is needed to increase accountability and to improve the knowledge base in the field.

Based on these lessons learned, the report recommends:

1. A comprehensive description of best practice in adult literacy programs should be created
2. Literacy policies need to be embedded in all other social policies — employment, training, health and wellness, law and order
3. The seven lessons learned should be addressed as challenges by HRDC

The "Lessons Learned" technical report can be found on the HRDC (Evaluation and Data Development) website <www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/edd>.

For more information on FuturEd, go to <www.futured.com>.

The 1999 Co-operators Award Presented

At the annual meeting, Melody Edwards was presented with the 1999 Co-operators Learner Achievement Award for B.C. The learner award is given yearly to a learner who has demonstrated real commitment to improving his or her reading and writing skills. Melody is a student in the ABE program at the College of the Rockies in Fernie.

Peter Podovnikoff, CEO, Delta Credit Union, presented the award to Melody, which included a cheque for \$200, certificate and pen.

In his presentation, Mr. Podovnikoff read from the nomination submitted by Melody's instructor, Mary Shier. "Melody is a hardworking, dedicated student who has faced many obstacles but refuses to give up. When she started with me she had very low reading skills. She had difficulty with very simple words and explained to me that she had tried before but had been told by several experts that she would never learn to read.

This year she read her first novel — "Little House on the Prairie" — and is now immersed in the entire series."

Congratulations to Melody Edwards for winning the 1999 Co-operators Learner Achievement Award



Award winner Melody Edwards with Literacy BC President Paul Gallagher

"When I finished my first novel, it was the most wonderful feeling. I can't even say it without feeling overwhelmed inside. Now I can pick up a book and enjoy it. It is hard to explain what it feels like after not being to read for so many years. It is like a whole new world opening up to you."


**the
co-operators**
A Better Place For You™

In accepting the award, Melody said, "I am so proud of myself that I can sit down and read. I am glad I don't have to depend on other people as much. If I mess up, I'll just try again...I hope

governments and colleges understand how important it is to continue to support these programs... It is a wonderful chance for us...and thanks to all of you who support literacy."

Literacy BC Plans for 1999-2000

by Linda Mitchell, Executive Director

Public awareness

To meet the ever increasing demand for information on literacy in B.C., we will:

- Plan and implement the B.C. International Literacy Day campaign, Take 5 and READ
- Undertake a direct mail information campaign which will focus on related public sector agencies and include focussed literacy fact sheets
- Plan a public event for September 8th to provide recognition of learnership in literacy in BC and include presentations to the B.C. winners of the Canada Post Literacy Awards
- Develop "Literacy Lane" at the 1999 The Word on the Street (WOTS) event and implement key public awareness activities related to Family Literacy Day 2000

Influence public policy on literacy issues in BC.

We are pleased with our success with the Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology in moving outstanding key issues forward (common credential, regional planning, good practice). We will continue to:

- Monitor and react to the activities of the now established ABE Transitions Committee and Provincial Training Accord
- Consult with the Ministries for Children and Families, Health, Seniors, Justice and Human Resource Development Canada to encourage strategic alliances and interministerial approaches.

There is a need to forge new relationships and increase political support for literacy in B.C.

- In consultation with literacy programs/groups, we will research and develop a plan, format and content for a province-wide Literacy Action Day in the year 2001. The plan will be based on the Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL) model but will include, where appropriate, the following as the target audiences:
 - Elected provincial and federal officials
 - The B.C. provincial cabinet and senior ministry staff
 - B.C. Chambers of Commerce
 - B.C. mayors



Literacy BC Plans for 1999-2000 (cont'd)

Support for adult learners in B.C.

In order to increase support for and participation by learners in the literacy movement in B.C., we will undertake the following activities:

- Support and coordinate the activities of the Provincial Learners Committee.
- Plan and implement an action research project on How to Build a Provincial Learners Network
- Publish two issues of a newsletter directly focused on learners' events, projects and activities
- Develop a closer relationship/partnership with the annual B.C. Regional Learner events

In addition, we will continue to:

- Make sure that at least 25% of the Literacy BC board are learners
- Mentor and support learners who participate on provincial and national boards and committees
- Provide support and publicity to the annual Co-operators Learner Achievement Award
- Continue our partnership with ABC CANADA in a national longitudinal research study on recruitment and retention in literacy programs.

Coordination, communication and support for the literacy community in B.C.

- Provide leadership and support to an electronic conferencing and communication network for B.C.
- Provide leadership and support to the development of a regional and national electronic conferencing system
- Provide a unique, relevant and responsive provincial literacy resource and information centre
- Provide consultation, support and coordination for the development of regional literacy networks
- Plan a provincial Conference and Forum for the Fall 2000 and celebrate Literacy BC's 10th anniversary

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Literacy BC Plans for 1999-2000 (cont'd)

Family literacy

- Develop a family literacy promotion, resource and public awareness kit for provincial distribution
- Plan and implement three major events related to family literacy
 - 1) In partnership with Starbucks Coffee Company, implement a province-wide children's book drive
 - 2) Provide support and leadership to family literacy development in B.C. through a one week Family Literacy Summer Institute
 - 3) Coordinate Family Literacy Day 2000 activities
- Provide training, consultation, support and coordination to existing and new family literacy programs
- Build partnerships at the provincial level with family literacy's natural allies, both government and corporate
- Develop a best practices document for the family literacy field in B.C.

Workforce literacy

- Implement eight workforce literacy initiatives which will:
 - help employers, unions and educators recognize their direct stake in and responsibility around workforce literacy
 - provide consultation, information and support services to employers, workers and educators
 - develop strong, collaborative partnerships around workforce literacy issues and programs

Build and support literacy research capacity and activities in B.C.

There is growing interest in literacy research among literacy practitioners and the academic institutions in B.C. Given this, we will undertake the following activities, in consultation with the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, UBC and SFU:

- Apply, with SFU, to Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) for a development grant which will build a network of adult, workforce and family literacy practitioners in B.C. who are committed to conducting a series of individual and joint practitioner-based research projects over the next three years.
- In consultation with SFU, UBC and interested practitioners, develop a three year strategic grant proposal to SSHRC which would:
 - Build the research capacity within the literacy practitioner community in B.C.
 - Provide a structure for mentoring and training opportunities
 - Establish an ongoing agenda and program of practitioner-based research

Attention: Students and Literacy Workers

You are invited to have a Learner Event. Any group of adult literacy learners may apply.

Learner Events give students a chance to plan events to talk about issues they think are important and experiences that they have in common. The Learner Events can also be used to let other people know about the problems that many adults have with reading and writing and tell them about the programs that can help them.

Learner Events are planned, organized and held by learners. The role of instructors is to provide help, but not to make the decisions or do most of the work.

Learner Events can be workshops, plays, conferences, open houses, or many other things. In the past, learners have used the Events to do things like make videos, hold meetings, have talent shows, find out about careers, or go on field trips. Some events have been small with 10 to 15 students. Some have been very large with over 200 students and people from the community.

- At least half of your planning committee must be students.

- Your event must be held between February and the end of May, 2000.

The deadline for applications is November 26, 1999.

Jennifer Cliff-Marks, Literacy BC Regional Literacy Coordinator for the Selkirk Region is the new coordinator of Learners Talking to Learners.

Applications for Learner Events have been distributed across the

province, and if you did not receive one and would like to hold a Learner Event, contact:

Jennifer Cliff-Marks
Learners Talking to Learners
c/o Box 923
Nakusp, B.C. V0G 1R0
Phone: (250) 265-4193
Fax: (250) 265-4195
E-mail: jcliff-marks@
thehub.capcollege.bc.ca

Attention all literacy and ABE program coordinators

*This fall we will be surveying the field in B.C. in order to update our **Directory of Literacy and Adult Basic Education Programs**. The Directory is an important source of information for the Literacy BC provincial information and referral service. The comprehensive survey will also be a useful research tool by providing a picture of program delivery in B.C. and will form part of a national database on NALD (The National Adult Literacy Database).*

We rely on you to keep us informed of important changes in your program content or contact people so we are better able to serve the potential learners and volunteers who call us.

*If you have any questions about the survey, please contact:
Sandy Middleton at Literacy BC, (604) 684-0624, toll-free 1-800-663-1293,
e-mail literacy_bc@douglas.bc.ca.*

Thank you in advance for your help!

Event Honours Literacy Award Winners

September 8 was an occasion for celebration as Literacy BC members, staff and guests joined with Canada Post to celebrate International Literacy Day and honour the B.C. winners of the Canada Post Literacy Awards.



"A Celebration: Literacy, Learning and Life" was held at the Executive Inn in Vancouver, where close to 100 people gathered for the B.C. awards ceremonies. The very special event was a celebration of the many friendships, partnerships and initiatives that promote literacy and lifelong learning in B.C. Helping us celebrate were literacy practitioners and colleagues, and representatives from education, business, government and labour.

The Canada Post Literacy Awards are presented annually to recognize literacy achievement, literacy leadership, and literacy education.

Congratulations to:

Barbara Stewart Individual Achievement award winner

Barbara started in the VALT (Volunteer Adult Literacy Tutoring) Program at the College of New Caledonia, Quesnel and enrolled in the fundamental literacy program through the Quesnel School District, in October of 1998. When she began, she could not read the questions on a job application form, help her son with his homework, read stories to him, or correspond with his teacher. Because she could not read, she was dependent on social workers to help her with doctor appointments, grocery shopping, fill out all forms and read her private mail. She felt she had no privacy.

Barbara says she decided to go back to school "because I wanted to improve my life, my ability to get a job, and

to increase my independence. I wanted to show my son that education was important. Through my example, I wanted him to become a responsible individual who contributes to society. I wanted to be proud of myself, and I wanted my son to be proud of me."

"When I first began the program," says Barbara, "I was able to read at the grade one level. I know I am now reading novels at a grade five level. When I first began....I could write my name. Today I am completing a research project on the gray wolf.

If I had not improved my literacy skills, I believe I would still be on the

couch listening to other adults tell me what to do and how to do it. I would be alone because I would not believe I was able to handle any kind of relationship. My parenting skills would be inadequate because I would not have attended parenting classes, or read about parenting skills...I believe I am a better parent, partner, and community member since I have become literate."



Barbara Stewart with George Affleck, B.C. and Yukon Community Newspapers Association and Dan Campbell, Canada Post.

Event Honours Literacy Award Winners

Delta School District, Continuing Education

Literacy Leadership

The district has been a provincial leader in adult literacy training, with a long history of removing many of the barriers adult literacy students face. In 1976, there were no adult literacy courses available in Delta. Through the pioneering work of its instructors and dozens of teachers and volunteers, thousands of adults over the past 23 years have developed their literacy skills. Some innovations in recent years include: learner events organized by staff and students; English language courses run at an elementary school during morning hours for the parents of students attending the school; on-site child care at the Delview Adult Learning Centre; and participation with community partners such as libraries and the Delta Credit Union in literacy initiatives. Delta Continuing Education now has approximately 750 adults enrolled in literacy courses each year and an active volunteer tutor program.



The award was accepted on behalf of the Delta School District by Yvonne Chard (centre) pictured with Dan Campbell, Canada Post (left) and Ron King, ACE INA Insurance (right).

Robert Wedel, Capilano College

Literacy Education Award



Shown receiving his award is Robert Wedel (right) with Dan Campbell, Canada Post (centre) and Sue Same, National Bank of Canada (left).

Robert is a faculty member at Capilano College, where he is responsible for developing and implementing workplace education programs in the health care and forestry sectors. He was nominated by his colleagues for his work in creating curriculum materials used in hospitals and for developing a literacy upgrading pilot project for workers in the pulp and paper industry. His colleagues say, "Robert's approach to literacy instruction is the empowerment model...every opportunity is offered to learners to become active participants in their own learning. Robert's style is democratic and eclectic. He is able to listen to the learner or the tutor with an open mind and apply all of his varied background to the situation."

Focus on...

Developments in Family Literacy

Family Summer Literacy Institute

The 1999 Literacy BC Family Summer Literacy Institute — the first ever in B.C. — was held at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby Campus, July 12- 16. The Institute brought 79 people together for workshops, seminars, a Best Practices Forum on Family Literacy, and an informal gathering for networking, sharing ideas and expertise.

The Institute was designed to provide professional development opportunities for family literacy

practitioners and coordinators in B.C. A number of practitioners from several other provinces and one territory also attended. Workshops/seminars and the Forum were designed to meet the expressed needs of the field, and facilitators were chosen for their expertise in these areas.

Thank you to all the participants, facilitators and presenters who made the 1999 Family Summer Literacy Institute such a success. The Institute was a wonderful opportunity for learning and networking, and it was great to get reacquainted



Group from the Best Practices in Family Literacy Forum.



Left to right: Nilambri Ghai from the National Literacy Secretariat, Suzanne Smythe and Joanne Harris.

with old friends and make new ones.

A comprehensive final report on the 1999 Family Summer Literacy Institute is available from Literacy BC at a cost of \$6.00 for shipping and handling. Call Jean Rasmussen at Literacy BC if you would like the report sent to you.

Update on First Call Spotlight on Children and Youth

First Call is a coalition of almost 50 provincial organizations and hundreds of community groups and individuals who promote legislation, policy and practice to help children and youth achieve their full potential. The First Call mission states that children and youth must receive a "first call" on society's resources because they are our future.

The Spotlight on Children and Youth Campaign has produced a "call to action" booklet for community leaders that provides background research and ideas for action.

For more information, contact:

First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition

Cindy Carson, Coordinator

L408 - 4480 Oak Street

Vancouver, B.C. V6H 3V4

Phone: (604) 875-3629

Fax: (604) 875-3569

Toll free: 1-800-307-1212

E-mail: info@firstcallbc.org

www.firstcallbc.org



Focus on...

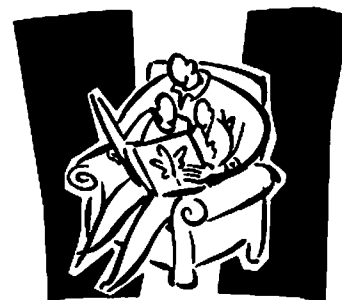
Developments in Family Literacy

National Family Literacy Day

Following the success of last year's first-ever **National Family Literacy Day**, family literacy programs, coordinators, practitioners and individual families expressed a sense of pride in being part of "something bigger" and are already in the process of developing activities and creating more partnerships for **Family Literacy Day 2000 on January 27**.

Creating this special day to celebrate families and learning is a very important and powerful community development tool and a great way to get the message

out. Partnerships between government ministries (Children and Families, Health, and Education), schools, teachers, community organizations and families are enriched and strengthened as a result, at the provincial and regional levels.



**FAMILY LITERACY
DAY**

Family Literacy Practitioners: Start thinking about what YOU can do in YOUR program or community

- Materials and resources will be available from ABC CANADA
- All B.C. mayors will be asked to proclaim January 27, 2000 **Family Literacy Day** in their community
- B.C. Premier Dan Miller is on board with his support for **National Family Literacy Day**
- Literacy BC will produce a resource/public awareness kit

**Start thinking about what you can do
for this exciting national event!**

Honda Canada support for Family Literacy continues...

Honda Canada has distributed funds from the 1999 Honda Odyssey Car Play Kits to literacy coalitions across Canada, including \$15,000 to B.C. The money will be distributed by Literacy BC to qualifying family literacy programs and services over the next few months. Criteria will be set and eligible programs will be asked to apply.

*Over the past year, there has been a 55% increase in family literacy programs and services in BC, and the numbers are climbing. At present there are more than 50 family literacy programs and services throughout the province. While family literacy programs provide excellent opportunities for children and families, they can not do this isolation — there is a need for more concrete support and greater awareness on the part of the general public. Thanks to the efforts of partnerships such as **ABC CANADA** and **Honda Canada**, opportunities are created and "real" support is provided. And in the end, this is what matters.*

On behalf of family literacy programs and services in B.C., we would like to extend our gratitude to Honda Canada for their generous contribution and exemplary efforts over the past year.



Focus on...

Seniors and Literacy

Over the next few years, the proportion of older persons worldwide — defined by the United Nations as 60 and over — will increase from one in 14 to one in four. In recognition of this significant demographic trend, in 1992, the U.N. declared 1999 the **International Year of Older Persons**.

The purpose of the Year of Older Persons is to foster international awareness of the importance of the seniors to society and the need for intergenerational respect and support.

Some facts from the Canadian perspective:

- Canada's senior population is among the fastest growing in the world. While seniors represent 12% of the total population today, by 2041 they will account for an estimated 23% of all Canadians.
- Canada's theme for the International year of Older Persons is "Canada — a society for all ages." The theme was developed by representatives of the federal, provincial and territorial governments in

consultation with seniors and seniors' organizations.

- A total of 61 national and regional International Year of Older Persons projects totalling \$4.8 million have received funding from Health Canada's Population Health Fund.
- The National Literacy Secretariat is also supporting many activities that relate to the International Year of Older Persons, especially by helping to fund intergenerational literacy initiatives that bring seniors and youth together.

Educational Attainment and Literacy Levels

Seniors have, on average, relatively low levels of formal educational training. For example, only 8% of all Canadians aged 65 and over had a university degree in 1996, compared with 17% of people between the ages of 25 and 64. Seniors were also less likely than their younger counterparts to have a certificate or diploma from a non-university post-secondary institution.

The majority of today's seniors, over six out of ten, never completed high school. Of these, 25% had

attended, but had not graduated from high school, while 37% had less than a Grade 9 education.

Partly as a result of their relative lack of formal educational experience, many seniors have difficulty reading written material. Indeed, 53% were only able to perform simple reading tasks, such as locating one piece of information in a text, in the International Adult literacy Survey conducted in 1994.

A substantial number of Canadian seniors, however,

are currently back in school. In 1996, almost 20,000 were enrolled in some kind of formal educational program. Of these, about a quarter were registered as full-time students, with the remainder enrolled on a part-time basis

From *Statistical Snapshot No. 9, prepared by Statistics Canada for the Division of Aging and Seniors, Health Canada, International year of Older Persons website:*
<http://iyop-aipa.ic.gc.ca>

Focus on...

Seniors and Literacy

Some suggested activities for the International Year of Older Persons

Children

Invite grandparents to your daycare centre or school to share a story about their childhood or to read favourite childhood poems or stories.

Develop a “Book of Grandparent Treasures” in which children can place pictures, photos, recipes or other things that are meaningful to their grandparents.

Hold a contest for the best story, poem, poster or play about the importance of grandparents or other older persons in young children’s lives.

Youth

Invite older students to put up a “Wall of Fame” of seniors in their families, school, community or elsewhere whom they admire for making a difference by speaking their mind, achieving great things or contributing something special to society.

Ask students to work with seniors on an oral history project. Young people can record interviews asking about the traditions, history and lifestyles of previous generations and the changes seniors have witnessed in their lives.

Encourage teachers to discuss aging issues (independence, participation, care, self-fulfillment, dignity) and invite older people to visit the school to talk to youth about these issues.

Invite students to share their knowledge and skills with seniors (navigating the Internet, or using computers).

Seniors

Prepare a seniors’ book (recipes, crafts, old photo or story book) and sell it to raise money for a local seniors’ charity.

Organize a sidewalk art festival/theatrical/musical event with a senior theme.

Invite seniors to create a “Then and Now” community mural depicting important times in their lives as well as exciting and important activities in which they are currently involved. Highlight their contribution to the community.

Families

Prepare a family tree. Include your own special family traditions and the story behind them.

Develop a family time capsule. Include items that are important to each family member, including grandparents and senior relatives. The capsule could be opened on a future International Day for Older Persons (October 1).

Have all family members contribute to the planning of a special family event, such as a holiday celebration or meal where seniors are honoured.

Neighbourhoods

Organize a community walk to emphasize the health benefits of physical activity for children, parents and seniors. Invite local dignitaries and serve snacks and refreshments afterward.

Organize a special event to highlight seniors’ diversity, talents, skills, resources, knowledge or contributions to your community.

Hold a community information session (involving local health professionals and/or community service providers and seniors) to discuss the implications of Canada’s aging society for community services, programs and community life in general.

From International Year of Older Persons website:
<http://iyop-aipa.ic.gc.ca>.

Focus on...

BC Seniors and Literacy

Literacy BC has some excellent resources on seniors and literacy available for borrowing.

In 1996, Prince George College of New Caledonia ABE instructor Maree Thair initiated a project unique to B.C. when she encouraged local seniors to begin writing about their historical experiences, and had their work published through a literacy cost-shared grant. The result was **Writers, Young and Old...** a collection of stories by the Prince George Seniors' Writing Circles (residents at three local seniors residences and activity centres) with input from fundamental level English students at the College. The project involved 62 seniors ranging in age from 70-91 from diverse ethnic, educational and socio-economic backgrounds.

Recently — to coincide with the International Year of Older Persons — **Writers, Young and Old...** was posted in full text format on the National Adult Literacy Database website (www.nald.ca). The book can be found by going to the NALD Literacy collection — Recent Additions link.

Maree is thrilled with this exposure as she looks back on this "extremely worthwhile project."

The driving force behind instigating the writing circles was "the realization that seniors in local facilities had no opportunity to write. Intellectual stimulation is often lacking. Taking a holistic approach to their lives is absolutely necessary."

She says the coordinators of the centres she approached "were delighted to help. We had some very mentally active seniors who jumped at the opportunity to participate. They have a wealth of stories to tell. There are a lot of seniors out there who need this type of program, who are creative, with lots of stories within them."

Following the publication of **Writers, Young and Old...** Maree produced, **Highlights of our Lives: A guide to Creating Writing Circles for Seniors (June 1998)**. This guidebook documents the development of the two-year project between the Prince George seniors and College of New Caledonia ABE English students. The guidebook provides valuable insights

and assistance to anyone wishing to organize a senior's writing circle. You can also view this publication in full text format on the NALD website.

"Getting back to country school teachers, the Eaton's catalogue was also important to them. When the Christmas concerts took place, each child received a little gift from Santa. It was handy for the teachers to make out a list of names and ages, and amount to be spent. This was then sent to Eaton's, where Santa's elves did the shopping, wrapping and tagging....Eaton's catalogue, then, was like going to a shopping mall, or the Internet of today, with the convenience of shopping from home... Dear old Eaton's catalogue, you served Canadians so faithfully for many generations, and left us with so many memories of the good old days."

From a story in *Writers Young and Old* called *Eaton's Catalogue*, by Laura Dunford (reprinted with permission).

Focus on...

BC Seniors and Literacy

Available for loan
from Literacy BC

Other resources of interest:

Treasure of Memories and Memories of Days Gone By, written and edited by the Seniors Writing Circle of Kiwassa Neighbourhood House (Vancouver) with students in the Basic Education Department, Vancouver Community College. These personal stories are memories by seniors of living in western Canada from the 1920's to the 1990's.

Vancouver Community College, Basic Education still has lots of free copies available of *Vancouver Stories: "People in its History" and "Places in its History"* (2 separate volumes).

To order, contact V.C.C. Basic Education at:

**Phone (604) 871-7369
(please speak to Sherry)
Fax (604) 871-7367**

Leave your name, address, and number of copies you would like shipped.

Creating Plain Language Forms for Seniors. A Guide for the Public, Private, and Not-for-Profit Sectors.

A guide to developing forms that seniors will find easier to read and complete. The types of forms examined include health, banking, insurance and government pension benefits. A project by the National Literacy and Health Program of the Canadian Public Health Association.

SkillPlan Director Moves to New Job

Jim Lippert, the former executive director of SkillPlan, the B.C. Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council, has moved on to a new position as a senior site representative at Highway Constructors Ltd.

SkillPlan was founded in 1991 to provide basic and technical skills upgrading for workers in the unionized construction industry in B.C. and the Yukon. Jim had been executive director of the organizations for eight years.

Highway Constructors

Ltd. (HCL) is the employer of construction labour for all provincially-funded highway and related projects valued at \$30 million or more. HCL was established in 1994 to ensure that local workers and communities receive maximum economic and social benefits from capital spending in B.C.

Jim says he "has no intention of divorcing himself from workplace essential skills and literacy issues" and remains a member of the BC Workforce Literacy Advisory Council.

Jim served as a Literacy BC board member from 1992 to

1994 during which time he was also Treasurer.

Jim is a board member of Skills Canada, an organization that facilitates secondary and post-secondary trades competitions at the regional, provincial, federal and international levels.

SkillPlan's new Executive Director is former Manager, Lynda Fownes. Lynda Fownes joined SkillPlan in 1992 as Research Director and has designed and managed a wide range of projects involving employers, unions, governments and educators.

New Monograph in the International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS) Series:

Inequalities in Literacy Skills Among Youth in Canada and the United States

By J. Douglas Willms of the Atlantic Centre for Policy Research, University of New Brunswick.

Since the IALS Canada report, *Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada*, Statistics Canada and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) have published research based on IALS data.

This study examines inequalities in the literacy skills of youth aged 16 to 25 in Canada and the U.S. Literacy skills tests measured abilities in the areas of prose, document and quantitative literacy. The study demonstrates inequalities associated with family background, sex, immigrant status and ethnicity, and whether overall levels of literacy skills and inequalities among groups vary among states and provinces. The analyses were conducted separately for each of the three types of literacy skills.

Some highlights:

The study's main finding is, "It matters where you live." The skills of youth from disadvantaged backgrounds vary considerably

depending upon where they are schooled. For instance, a disadvantaged youth in Alberta would tend to graduate from secondary school with higher literacy skills than one from Ontario. However, youth from a higher socioeconomic background tend to graduate with similar results, no matter what province they are from.

Inequalities in the literacy skills of youth are associated with the educational background of their parents.

- On average, Canadian youth have literacy skills equivalent to roughly one to two years of schooling higher than American youth (age 16-25) on all three measures of literacy — prose, document and quantitative. But when the education level of parents is considered, the results are about the same for both countries. Youth whose parents have at least 12 years of formal education score higher than those from families with lower levels of education.
 - In the U.S., females had higher scores on the
- prose and document literacy tests than males, but similar scores on the quantitative test. In Canada, the differences between female and male youth depend on the educational background of their parents. If parents are highly educated, females outperform males on all three tests, whereas there is a male advantage for youth whose parents have less than a high school education. Overall, females scored about one year of schooling higher than males on the prose test, and one year of schooling lower on the quantitative test. Results from earlier research indicate that the inequalities between the sexes varies across the Canadian provinces.
- Youth who engaged in literacy activities at home — such as reading or writing letters — on a regular basis had considerably better literacy skills. Similarly, watching television was negatively associated with literacy skills. The effect was substantial: each additional hour of watching television had an effect equivalent to nearly a half a year of schooling.

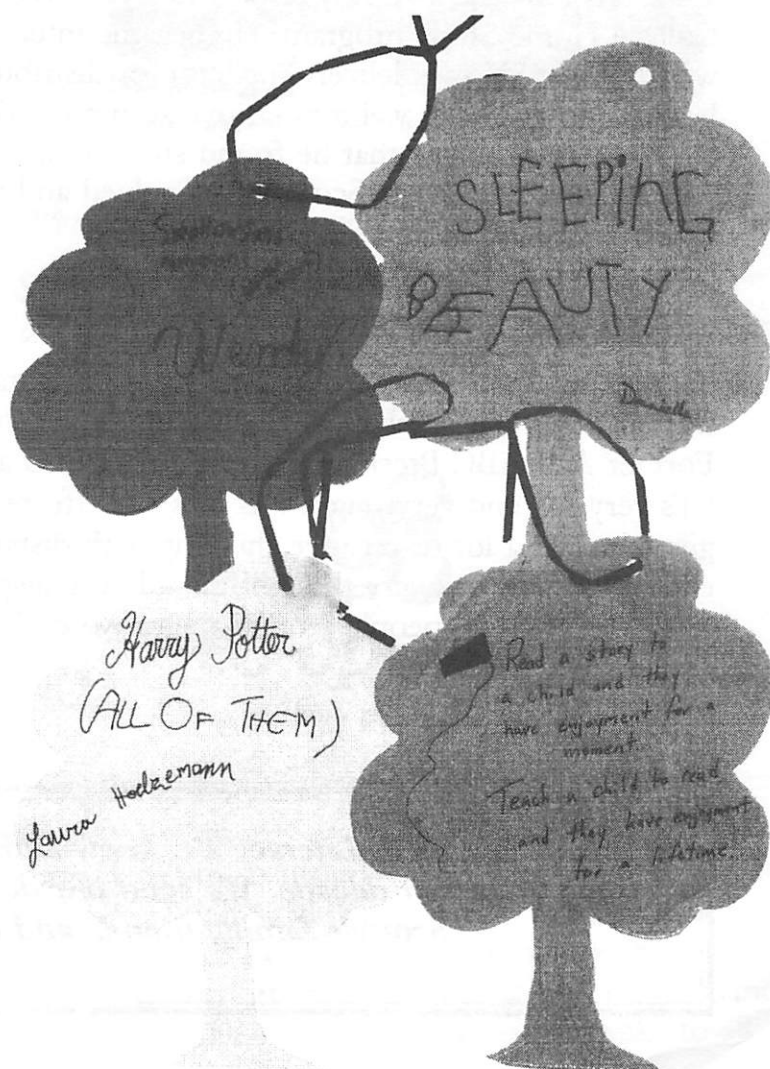
Word on the Street a Huge Success

Vancouver's 5th annual **Word on the Street** Festival Sunday, September 26 attracted thousands of people to the downtown Vancouver Public Library for a day of author readings, book and periodical selling, family fun and entertainment. A special thanks to **Starbucks Coffee Company** for sponsoring Starbucks Literacy Lane, a celebration and promotion of family literacy with literacy and learning-based exhibitors, hands-on activities, and readings for all ages.

Literacy Lane featured a tree of paper leaves, on which children and adults were asked to write the names of their favourite books or authors. Shown here are a few of the "leaves" contributed by some of the visitors to the Literacy BC display table.



West Vancouver Secondary School student Nicholas de Cosson — son of our Family Literacy Project Manager, Jean Rasmussen — helped visitors to **Starbucks Literacy Lane** add the names of their favourite books and authors to the Literacy Tree.



Tribute to Carlton Scott

A long time adult basic education instructor known to many people in the B.C. literacy field has died in Castlegar. Friends and colleagues at Selkirk College were saddened by the loss of Carlton Scott – know to all as “Scotty” – as a result of an accident in September.

Scotty was born in Arkansas City, Kansas. He earned a B.Sc. in Biology/Education from Utah State University, followed by a M.Sc. in Science Education and Plant Physiology from the University of Montana in 1965. He immigrated to Canada in 1971.

After he settled in Trail in the mid-1970’s, he joined the faculty of Selkirk College as an ABE and Biology instructor at the Trail Campus. He later worked with Selkirk’s International Education Department and was instrumental in developing the telecommunications curriculum project in 1992. In 1994, he assumed responsibility for the delivery of the Selkirk College Home Study program. He became interested in the Internet and the world wide web as a delivery medium for distributed learning, and voluntarily became the college’s webmaster, overseeing the development of the college website. It was a role that he found stimulating and challenging. During his years at Selkirk College, Scotty was a valued and respected colleague, and received two Meritorious Service Awards.

Among his personal interests were boatmaking, woodworking, canoeing, cycling and gardening.

Scotty served for two years as regional representative for the Selkirk region on the board of the Adult Basic Education Association of B.C.(ABEABC). Former ABEABC President Patty Bossort, also a friend and colleague, says “it’s very sad and very tragic. His loss has affected us all. He was an energetic guy who did a lot of creative thinking with distance ed and computer education. He was very thoughtful and very helpful to everyone. He certainly did touch a lot of people around the province.”

Some of us at Literacy BC knew and worked with Scotty over the past decade. We send our deepest condolences to Scotty’s family, friends and colleagues.

Walks for Literacy Raise \$\$ in B.C.

In 1994, Carol Bossio, a learner at The Write Place in Parksville, organized the first Walk for Literacy in that community. The walk raised \$3000. The following year, another learner, Ingrid Braathen at the Adult Learning Centre in Courtenay got involved, and a second Walk for Literacy was successfully organized there. Now, the walks are an annual event in several B.C. communities.

Ingrid and Carol later produced a "how-to" booklet outlining the steps groups can take to plan and organize a walk. The book is called **Walk for Literacy — A Step in the Right Direction**. Copies are available at Literacy BC (call 1-800-663-1293).

Here's an update on some of the walks that have been held this year.

Chilliwack

From Vicki Grieve
Families in Motion held a Walk for Literacy on April 27, 1999. The event was a great success — over 500 walkers participated, including the

entire population of MacCammon Elementary School, a Families in Motion partner. Mayor John Les was there to welcome the walkers, and to thank the many local businesses who contributed prizes to reward those who received the most pledges. In addition, the local **Starbucks, Save-on-Foods** and **Tim Hortons** contributed coffee, juice and donuts for all the walkers. The event raised over \$3,000 for Families in Motion. We will certainly do another walk in April 2000. It seems we have found a great time of year to hold the event, as we have already had inquiries from other elementary schools who are interested in participating.

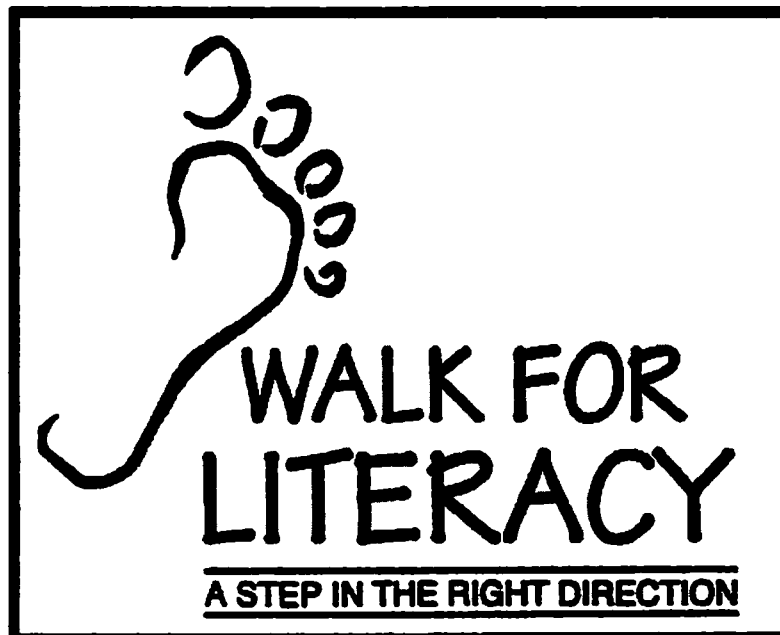
Courtenay

From Maria Lynn Johnson
The 5th Annual Walk for Literacy was held on **Saturday, June 12**, with about 60 people turning out for the walk and \$ 3,492 raised through pledges. Thank you to all who helped plan this event and a very big thank you to everyone who asked for donations and collected pledges. Funds raised will support the tutoring program at C.A.L.L.S. (Community Adult Literacy and Learning Society) to help people improve their reading, writing and math skills.

Dawson Creek

The Mile Zero Metis Society in cooperation with the **Kakiskimitotan Learning Centre** held its first walk on Wednesday, September 8, 1999. The money raised helps to support the operation of the Learning Centre.

The Mission Literacy Association in conjunction with the **Metis Cultural Association** plan to hold a Walk in the near future.





Donor Appreciation

Thank you to the following individuals who have donated \$100 or more to Literacy BC:

Nancy Ashurst
Jennifer Cliff-Marks
Flagship System Employees
The Globe and Mail
McClelland and Stewart
Art Middleton,
MicroComputers & Graphics
David Moddle
Molson Breweries

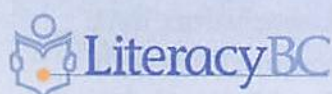
And to those who have contributed up to \$100

Heather and Bruce Baptie
Can Do Creations
The Certified General Accountants Association of Canada
Wayne Cunningham
Deloitte & Touche employees
Olive and George Ditchburn
Muriel Gilchrist
Marrett Green
Vicki Grieve
Vicky Hallett
The Hydrecs Fund
Anne Knott
Royal Bank Financial Group employees

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Included with this issue of Imprints...

- *The Literacy BC 1998-1999 Annual Report*
- *Literacy Matters...Can we Close Our Literacy Gap?*
Journalist Peter Calamai explores Canada's literacy crisis.
- *literacy.ca* The October 1999 newsletter of the Movement for Canadian Literacy, compliments of MCL.
- *Literacy Research Circles*. A joint project of Simon Fraser University and Literacy BC.



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Federal Charities Number: 12846-0334-RR0001

Look what's New

Resources

Resources

on our shelves...

Resources Available from Literacy BC

Intake Assessment Materials: Fundamental Level English and Math. Laurie Gould, Basic Education Department, Vancouver Community College, July 1999. "The purpose of this book is to provide fundamental Level (0-grade 8) instructors and adult students with a personal, friendly and relaxed procedure for discussing a student's educational experiences and goals. The assessments can be used to determine a student's instructional reading level, writing strengths and weaknesses, and knowledge of mathematical concepts and operations."

Adult Basic Education in British Columbia's Public Post-Secondary Institutions: An Articulation Handbook 1999-2000 Edition. Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology and Centre for Curriculum, Transfer and Technology, 1999. ***We have copies to give away.***

The Working Lives of Adult Literacy Practitioners. Wanda D. Arneson. Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Project, 1999. This project was developed "to give a deeper understanding of the working lives of literacy practitioners; to define the challenges within this reality, to determine if certain work situations were better than others and why; and to determine if certain support systems were more effective and why." The document also makes recommendations for improving support and communication systems for practitioners. ***We have many copies to give away.***

Learners Talking to Learners: An Evaluation. Mary Carlisle. Adult Literacy Cost-Shared Project, 1999. An evaluation of "Learners Talking to Learners," documenting the nature, history, context, evolution, structure, and issues of the project.

The Language of Documents: A Guide to Information Display in the Workplace. Lynda Fownes. SkillPlan, The B.C. Construction Industry Skills Improvement Council, 1999. This resource provides a language or vocabulary to talk about particular kinds of documents -- lists, tables, charts, entry forms, graphs, maps, photographs, drawings, diagrams, symbols/icons, flow charts, and other schematics. This resource also provides a kind of analysis on the unique visual and organizational features of these information-bearing entities.

Bushland Spirit - Our Elders Speak. Edited by Art Napoleon. Twin Sisters Publishing Co., Moberly Lake, B.C., 1999. Transcribed from interviews, this is a collection of stories told by Elder members of the Saúlteau First Nations community. ***We have copies to give away.***

Look what's New

Resources

Resources

on our shelves...

Community Action Guide: Working Together for the Prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. B.C. FAS Resource Society, 1999. "The purpose of this Guide is to support those interested in working on the prevention of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in communities across British Columbia."

The Air We Breathe: An Anthology of Poetry and Creative Writing Ideas for Adult Learners. Prepared by La Verne Adams and Vicki Grieve, University College of the Fraser Valley, 1999. Intended primarily for basic literacy students and their teachers/tutors, this resource provides an anthology of poems and also, through supplements of notes, vocabulary, and guided questions, invites readers to engage with the poems. *We have a few copies left to give away.*

From Literacy BC. We have free copies of these reports...

"It Guided Me Back to Learning": A Longitudinal Research Study on Calls to the Literacy BC Helpline. Prepared by Sandy Middleton with Bancroft Planning and Research Associates. Literacy BC, 1999. Hot off the press! This study examines participation issues in literacy education among adults who called the Literacy BC helpline for information and referral to literacy and ABE programs in their communities. Specifically, the study was designed to document who calls the helpline and why they want to improve their literacy skills."

1998 Summer Literacy Institute Final Report and the ***1999 Family Literacy Summer Institute Final Report.*** Jean Rasmussen, Literacy BC. Both reports document the planning process, the events, and follow-up to the Institutes.

From Ontario...

A Guide for the Development of Policies and Procedures in Ontario's Community Literacy Agencies. By Fiona Huebner. Community Literacy of Ontario, 1999.

Written for boards of directors in community-based literacy agencies who have legal responsibility for their agency's governance, this guide methodologically provides the considerations involved in developing policies and procedures.

Adults with Learning Disabilities: The Road to Success (video and program manual). Janet Johnson. St. Catharines, Ont: Learning Potentials/Sureen Publishing & Productions, 1996. Geared towards literacy instructors and vocational counsellors, this resource package helps professionals "provide quality (and practical) assistance to their adult clients with known or suspected learning disabilities."

Look what's New

Resources

Resources

on our shelves...

Program Evaluation: Literacy Bridging Initiative - A Program to Ease the Transition from an Informal to a More Formal Classroom Environment for Adult Learners. Terri Briffin Burman. An evaluation of the Literacy Bridging Initiative (LBI), a small group literacy program in Tillsonburg, Ontario. The report discusses the effectiveness and impact of the LBI in facilitating learning in a small group environment and getting students involved in a continuous learning process.

Literacy and Homelessness Project, Phase 3 Report: More Ideas. St. Christopher House Adult Literacy Program. Toronto, Ontario, 1999. Continuing work done in the previous two phases, this report describes the development of ways to "do literacy work with homeless, transient or other marginalized people."

From Alberta....

Letters to Our Children. Edited by Dorothy E. Badry, John R. McDonald, and Jan LeBlond. Letters to Our Children Project, Faculty of Social Work, University of Calgary, and the Social Work Research Unit, Alberta Children's Hospital, 1993. This book is a compilation of letters written by parents to their disabled children. As expressions of love, these letters tell a little of the history and upbringing of each child, the impact on the family, and include a vision for the child.

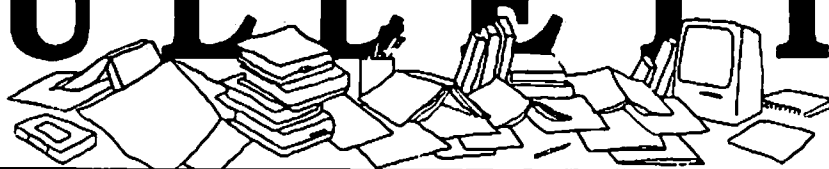
From Newfoundland....

Sea People: Changing Lives and Times in the Newfoundland and Labrador Fisheries A project of the Newfoundland and Labrador Committee for Literacy and Culture. Edited by Helen Woodrow and Frances Ennis, 1999. This book explores the life and work of six fishermen from Newfoundland and Labrador. Companion to *Strong as the Ocean*, which documents the work of women in the fishery.

From the U.S....

Voyager 1: Reading and Writing for Today's Adults. Christy M. Newman. New Readers Press, 1999. We carry resources for stage one of a nine-level program that "combines a contemporary theme-based approach with the best elements from traditional instruction. It teaches the essential reading, writing, listening, speaking, and critical thinking skills and strategies needed by adults to function on the job and today's diverse, rapidly change, and information-rich society." We have the Student Book, Workbook, and the Teacher's Resource Guide.

THE LITERACY MATERIALS BULLETIN



20

Fall 1999

• instructors • tutors • learners • administrators • coordinators • resource centres • learning centres •

Reviewed in The Literacy Materials Bulletin #20, Fall 1999

- *Gwa'Sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Stories, Volume 1* / By the children and literacy students of Gwa'Sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nation
- *Good Stuff* / Edited and illustrated by Jeanette Paul
- *Reaching the Peak: A Tutor's Handbook for Using the Community Newspaper* / Sandra Donnelly and Linda Rosen
- *Ten Legends Workbook: Ojibwa and Iroquois Legends* / Jim Tole
- *Oakland Readers* / Second Start Adult Literacy Program, Oakland (CA) Public Library
 - First Series
 - When I Travel, I Like to Fly*
 - Twelfth Grade Common Sense*
 - The South Was Pretty Cold*
 - Deep Feeling Feedback*
 - Fourth Series
 - Wore My New Clothes*
 - Them Words is in My Head*
 - I Didn't Have the Bookwork*
 - Education is the Way Out*
- *Her Story: Women from Canada's Past* / Susan E. Merritt
- *Her Story II: Women from Canada's Past* / Susan E. Merritt
- Fact Files series
 - Rainforests* / Rowena Akinyemi
 - Under the Ground* / Rosemary Border
 - Seasons and Celebrations* / Jackie Maguire
 - Animals in Danger* / Joe Potter and Andy Hopkins
- *Forgotten Warriors: The Story of Canada's Aboriginal War Veterans* / National Film Board of Canada
- *"something to think about, please think about this": Report on a National Study of Access to Adult Basic Education Programs and Services in Canada* / Susan Hoddinott
- *Weaving it Together (Book 1 and Book 2)* / Milada Broukal
- *Land of Hope (2 volume video set)* / National Film Board of Canada
- *For Your Information (Book 1 and Book 2)* / Karen Blanchard and Christine Root